



A mother and daughter from Altadena with hygiene supplies distributed by International Medical Corps at the San Gabriel Valley healthcare relief event.

From January 7–31, a series of wildfires raged across the Los Angeles region, destroying more than 16,000 homes, businesses and community centers, and displacing more than 200,000 people. Though the physical impact of the fires can be easily measured, the human impact—often the longest-lasting—remains more difficult to see.

The recovery process is ongoing, as many structures have been inundated with highly concentrated smoke and ash from the fires. The city and county continue to rebuild water pipes and electric lines, clear residual infrastructural debris and ensure that community members can return to areas that are safe and have minimized levels of residual toxicity.

In the meantime, many residents are still without permanent housing solutions as they navigate complex paperwork processes while managing financial loss, changes in schools, workplaces and home situations, and heightened mental and emotional stress.

Children, families, older people, people experiencing homelessness and essential workers have been particularly impacted and remain most vulnerable. Additionally, organizations providing care to unhoused peoples in areas like Skid Row, and in South and West Los Angeles, have recorded a notable increase in needs.

Local partners continue to report a significant increase in urgent mental health needs in the community. The demand for care

FAST FACTS

- A series of wildfires in January burned more than 16,000 structures in Los Angeles and displaced entire communities.
- Months later, many families and individuals are still in need of temporary shelter and long-term housing support. There is also a significant demand for mental health care, as affected community members continue to process the magnitude of the loss and change. The elderly, unhoused populations, and low-income and essential workers remain particularly vulnerable.
- Many health centers and social service organizations have reported staff members who have been directly affected by the fires, decreasing organizational capacity to meet increased community needs.

OUR RESPONSE

- International Medical Corps is now providing housing allowances for staff and clients at five local FQHCs and partner organizations, and is continuing to distribute recovery items, including air purifiers, nebulizers and hygiene kits. In the coming weeks, we will train staff from 30 health clinics and local organizations to build their emergency response capacity, helping them to meet challenges presented by future disasters.
- From January 17 to February 16, International Medical Corps provided direct medical and mental health services in two regional shelters and various community centers and distribution sites. Teams conducted 872 medical consultations and provided 632 residents with primary nursing care, conducted 1,261 mental health consultations and provided 3,145 people with mental health outreach services and [resources](#).
- We have so far distributed more than 40,000 response, recovery and medical items, 6,000 hygiene kits, 5,403 first-aid and wound-care kits and 35,600 face masks, as well as equipment for internet connectivity.
- International Medical Corps continues to coordinate closely with local, state and regional agencies, including the Los Angeles Mayor's Office, California Department of Public Health, California Emergency Medical Services Authority, California Primary Care Association, California Community Clinic Association of Los Angeles County, the Red Cross, and local organizations, shelters and health centers serving low-income and other vulnerable groups to support ongoing recovery efforts.

has risen dramatically and local organizations are working hard to conduct outreach to particularly vulnerable populations. However, many health centers and local organizations have also been directly impacted, with damaged or completely destroyed facilities, depleted supplies and stock (due to damage, or unanticipated spikes in demand), and dozens of staff who have lost their homes—reducing their operational capacity to meet the needs of the community.

International Medical Corps' Response

When the Palisades fire broke out on January 7, International Medical Corps immediately deployed an Emergency Response Team; working closely with national, state, county and local responders—including the American Red Cross, the California Department of Public Health, the California Primary Care Association and the Community Clinic Association of Los Angeles County—to meet the needs of vulnerable community members. We continue to partner with them to provide long-term recovery services.



An International Medical Corps volunteer nurse coordinates with Red Cross counterparts at the Santa Monica pier re-entry point.

From January 17 to February 16, International Medical Corps deployed a total of 58 medical and mental health professionals—many of whom are California and Los Angeles locals—to provide critical medical and mental health care in shelters, as well as at community distribution centers, events and re-entry points. In collaboration with the Red Cross, International Medical Corps provided around-the-clock medical and mental health care to residents affected by both the Palisades and Eaton fires—in the Westwood Recreation Center shelter and the Pasadena Convention Center shelter, respectively. We also managed the isolation unit in the Pasadena shelter. With the onset of the Hughes fire, we quickly deployed our medical teams to provide care within the College of the Canyon shelter. Over the course of this direct response, International Medical Corps conducted 872 medical consultations and provided 632 residents with primary nursing care, conducted 1,261 mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) consultations and provided 3,145 people with mental health outreach services.

We also partnered with 16 different organizations and health sites to provide urgently needed medical and non-medical supplies, helping to support their response to the community. The supplies we donated during this time period included more than 40,000 recovery and medical items, 35,600 KN95 and N95 face masks, 244 air-quality items (including nebulizer compressors and air purifiers), and 4,903 wound-care kits, among other items.

Recovery: Moving Forward

International Medical Corps is committed to the long-term and sustainable recovery of Los Angeles communities, and is working to fill gaps and provide surge resources for local partners, to help them meet an increase in healthcare needs as a result of the wildfires. To date, we've partnered with five health community clinic and nonprofit organization partners to:

- provide \$400,000 of housing allowances for rental support and critical household essentials for community clinic staff and clients;
- surge mental health capacity and services for clinics and affected communities;
- meet increased needs for homelessness services providers, including a recent delivery of 98 air purifiers, 74 nebulizers, 500 wound-care kits and 144 hygiene kits to a partner community-based organization serving people experiencing homelessness across Los Angeles; and
- facilitate emergency management training to help partners prepare for and respond to future emergencies.

As several partner community clinic networks and organizations located throughout both Eaton Fire and Palisades Fire-affected communities of Altadena, Pasadena and West Los Angeles have shared reports of dozens of staff and patients who have lost their houses, International Medical Corps is helping. We have provided housing allowances to one health center with more than 15 staff who lost homes in the fires, and are providing funds to three community health clinic networks to support rent and household essentials through direct cash assistance to both staff and patients whose resources have been stretched thin due to the fires.



Relief and recovery items being delivered to International Medical Corps partner organization, Sidewalk Project in Los Angeles.

To address the exponential increase in the need and number of unhoused people following the fires in Skid Row, MacArthur Park, and South and West Los Angeles, International Medical Corps has delivered 98 air purifiers, 74 nebulizers, 500 wound-care kits and 144 hygiene kits to the Sidewalk Project, an organization serving unhoused people throughout Los Angeles. International Medical Corps is also providing additional mental health resources and a mental health clinician to a local organization that focuses on unhoused people, as well as helping to cover overtime pay for healthcare workers who are conducting outreach to all patients and clients in fire-affected areas.

In response to requests from local partners, International Medical Corps is expanding its emergency-management training programs to provide staff from some 30 partner organizations—including federally qualified health centers (FQHCs), other health centers and local organizations—with practical tools, equipment and technical assistance for all facets and phases of emergency management. Adapted from our existing suite of training curriculums, these programs will help health centers and organizations better prepare for and respond to future disasters. Topics will include business-continuity planning, psychological first aid, hazard vulnerability assessments, severe weather preparation and mitigation, infectious-disease preparedness and more. We are also collaborating with regional partners, including the Community Clinic Association of Los Angeles County, to support similar county-wide capacity strengthening efforts, ensuring both the reach and sustainability of these activities.

International Medical Corps in the US and Territories

International Medical Corps has been an emergency responder in the United States and Caribbean since 2005, when we partnered with local community clinics overwhelmed by Hurricane Katrina. In the US, International Medical Corps works with national, state and local partners and agencies to deploy emergency response teams in response to disasters and address the significant challenges that face domestic healthcare services.

In the last seven years, we have engaged and supported a partner network of more than 275 hospitals, clinics, health and health-related facilities, and non-profit organizations across 18 states and territories in the United States, delivering health resources, services and training to more than 6 million patients and providers. We have collaborated since 2020 with the LA County Department of Public Health Services, LA Homeless Services Authority and local partner organizations.

In 2020 and 2021, International Medical Corps implemented a robust response to the COVID-19 outbreak nationwide. In the greater Los Angeles area, we deployed emergency medical field units and equipment to seven safety-net hospitals, delivered training and personal protective equipment to 51 long-term eldercare facilities and 176 health workers; managed a vaccination site at Kedren Community Health Center in south LA that delivered more than 140,000 vaccinations; and distributed 305 pieces of medical equipment and more than 2 million pieces of personal protective equipment to hospitals, health facilities and emergency medical services. In 2021, International Medical Corps conducted a multi-component project in California’s Central Valley to build the capacity of vulnerable populations in wildfire-impacted communities to better withstand and recover from wildfires.

Response to LA Wildfires *(as of April 11)*

16 sites supported	58 medical and MHPSS professionals deployed
6,000 hygiene kits distributed	1,280 first-aid kits distributed
39,049 hygiene products distributed	22,800 masks distributed
1,583 medical supplies distributed	4,123 wound-care kits distributed
1,194 other relief & recovery supplies distributed	416 air purifiers and air-quality items distributed
1,261 MHPSS consultations	3,145 participants in MHPSS outreach
872 medical consultations	632 patients given primary nursing care
60,781 direct beneficiaries	141,038 indirect beneficiaries